



Mishawaka Communicator



Working together to build the "Best Hometown in America" by delivering exceptional services, promoting safe and clean neighborhoods, elevating the quality of life, and inspiring pride in our community.

Dave Wood, Mayor

www.mishawaka.in.gov

January 2014

A Letter from Mayor Dave Wood



Mishawaka is one of over ninety communities in Indiana with a Combined Sewer Overflow system (CSO). Nationwide, there are more than 700 CSO communities. These systems, which were built in the first half of the last century, carry both stormwater and raw sewage in the same pipes. When there are heavy rains, combined sewers can become overloaded with incoming stormwater and discharge untreated sewage and stormwater into the river. These overflow points protect houses from basement flooding and prevent sewage from backing up onto streets and yards.

Mishawaka's sewer service area is approximately 11,400 acres with combined sewer drainage areas comprising about 2,250 of those acres, predominately within our older neighborhoods. There are twenty-two combined sewer overflow points in the combined sewer system. Mishawaka treats as much storm flow as physically possible at the wastewater plant. During wet weather the plant can treat peak flows up to 59 million gallons per day (MGD), well above the design peak flow of 42 MGD. During heavy rainstorms, the flow to the plant can increase five-fold in a matter of minutes.

Combined sewer overflows are no longer allowed by federal law. With Mishawaka recognizing early on that reducing and eliminating CSOs was important, projects have been ongoing for decades to eliminate the impact of CSOs. These projects have included upgrades at the wastewater plant, separation of sewers in select areas, upsizing sewers to eliminate bottlenecks in the sewer system, and very aggressive sewer maintenance. In 2004, the United States Environmental Protection Agency began an initiative to put all CSO communities into enforceable plans and establish timetables for the reduction of CSOs. These plans are called Long Term Control Plans (LTCPs).

Since November of 2004, Mishawaka has been negotiating its LTCP with the EPA, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), and the Department of Justice. These negotiations have centered on developing specific CSO reduction plans, timetables for construction, and on the language that would be placed into an enforceable

(continued on next page)

UPCOMING EVENTS!

Feb 21 Daddy/Daughter
Dance
(Battell Center)

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

VITA IRS-certified tax preparers will prepare and e-file your taxes for FREE!

Call 2-1-1 between 8am-5pm Mon-Fri to **confirm eligibility** and **schedule your appointment**.

Did you know...

Affordable assisted living services are now available in downtown Mishawaka. The Mishawaka Housing Authority, in conjunction with the Community Development Corporation of Mishawaka, is providing affordable assisted living services at River View 500, located at 500 Lincolnway East in Mishawaka.

Developed to serve low and moderate income people, the services include a private studio or one bedroom apartment, assistance with activities of daily living, medication assistance, full service dining room, weekly housekeeping and laundry, emergency call system, and licensed care staff available 24/7.

Payment for the apartment is based on income, and services are paid from Social Security and the Medicaid Waiver program.

For more information, call (574) 855-3937 or visit the website at www.vannonilivingcenter.org.



New Year's Resolution: Staying Fit!

Health Information from Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center

With the holidays behind us, many are turning their thoughts to beginning a new workout routine in order to reap the benefits of physical exercise. Because exercise improves the way your body works, it is essential for good health and is one of the best things you can do to look and feel better and even live longer.

Exercise begins to have a positive effect almost as soon as you start. For one thing, exercise makes your brain release "endorphins" -- hormones that make you feel good. This can help you enjoy the exercise and may improve your mood for several hours after your workout. Another benefit is that your muscles, having worked hard, can relax more easily. This helps you feel relaxed all over and sleep better at night.

Exercise can help just about anyone feel and look better, however some people should be cautious about beginning an exercise program. A doctor can help assess your risks and plan a program that is safe for you. If you do not currently exercise, speak to your doctor before you begin.

A Letter from Mayor Dave Wood *(continued)*

agreement called a Consent Decree. The City's goal in the negotiations was to arrive at an approved Long Term Control Plan that minimizes CSOs in a cost effective and affordable way. Because of the high cost of CSO reductions, which involves essentially re-engineering the existing combined sewer system, the City was granted 20 years to complete the projects in the LTCP. The projected cost for meeting the requirements in our federally mandated plan may exceed \$140 million. The combined sewer overflow Long Term Control Plan will be the largest public works project in the history of Mishawaka and will result in the elimination of overflows during typical storms that occur in Mishawaka.

On December 4, 2013 the City received notification from the Department of Justice that our LTCP received approval from the Federal and State agencies involved, and the Consent Decree may now be signed and lodged in Federal Court. The Consent Decree is a binding agreement that Mishawaka will fund, design, and construct the projects in the LTCP within the agreed to time-frame. Failure to meet these commitments can result in significant fines and penalties.

Mishawaka has diligently worked on CSO reduction projects during the nine years it took to complete the Consent Decree negotiations. Through early action projects, Mishawaka has reduced the annual volume of CSO by nearly 90% since 1990. Many CSO control projects have also provided other benefits to our older neighborhoods beyond improving water quality. Improved drainage, and street, curb, and sidewalk improvements are often components of projects. The recent massive reconstruction projects within the Milburn and Wilson Boulevard, and River Avenue areas were elements of the City's Long Term Control Plan to reduce CSOs. Addressing the remaining CSOs will be expensive and disruptive in the short-term, however the LTCP will meet federally mandated CSO control requirements cost-effectively.

The Consent Decree, and attached LTCP projects and schedules, will be presented to the Common Council at the January 6, 2014 meeting. A Council Resolution will give the Mayor the authority to enter into the agreement. After the City signs the Consent Decree it will be forwarded to the US EPA, the Department of Justice, and IDEM for their signatures. This will mark a new chapter in Mishawaka's long road toward eliminating the legacy of combined sewer overflows thus improving and protecting the water quality in the Saint Joseph River for future generations to enjoy.

Mayor Dave Wood



Save Money and Energy Today!

An energy-efficient home will keep your family comfortable while saving you money. Whether you take simple steps or make larger investments to make your home more efficient, you'll see lower energy bills. Over time, those savings will typically pay for the cost of improvements and put money back in your pocket.

The residences in America today collectively use an estimated 22% of the country's energy. Unfortunately, a lot of energy is wasted through leaky windows or ducts, old appliances, or inefficient heating and cooling systems. When we waste energy in our homes, we are throwing away money that could be used for other things. The typical U.S. family spends at least \$2,000 a year on home utility bills. You can lower this amount through following these Long Term Savings Tips.

The key to these savings is to take a whole-house approach. For example, your heating system is not just a furnace—it's a heat-delivery system that starts at the furnace and delivers heat throughout your home using a network of ducts. Even a top-of-the-line, energy-efficient furnace will waste a lot of fuel if the ducts, walls, attic, windows, and doors are leaky or poorly insulated. Taking a whole-house approach to saving energy ensures that dollars you invest to save energy are spent wisely.

- Install a programmable thermostat.
- Air dry dishes instead of using your dishwasher's drying cycle.
- Turn things off when you are not in the room. Plug home electronics, such as TVs and DVD players, into power strips; turn the power strips off when the equipment is not in use—TVs and DVDs in standby mode still use several watts of power.
- Lower the thermostat on your water heater to 120°F.
- Take short showers instead of baths and use low-flow showerheads for additional energy savings.
- Wash only full loads of dishes and clothes.
- Air dry clothes.
- Check to see that windows and doors are closed when heating or cooling your home.
- Look for the ENERGY STAR® label on light bulbs, home appliances, electronics, and other products.

If you are in need of assistance this winter you can call 211, which is an agency that provides social services in our community. Callers are screened for service eligibility and provided important information about access, including hours of operation and required documentation for receiving services. These early prescreening services eliminate inappropriate service requests to agencies, and allow those agencies to better leverage their resources for providing direct assistance.